



## **Main features, obligations and benefits under the Agreement for the Establishment of a Regional Animal Production and Health Commission for Asia and the Pacific**

### OVERVIEW

Animal diseases, including transboundary diseases, cause significant economic losses, undermine food security, and restrict opportunities for trade. Effective measures are essential to protect animal health and the agricultural sector's economic stability. Regional coordination on animal production and animal health guarantees efficient and timely disease detection and control, including for priority zoonotic and transboundary diseases. This, in turn, ensures food and livelihood security for all who depend on animals for food and income, thereby promoting global public health and security. By addressing these issues, the Regional Animal Production and Health Commission for Asia and the Pacific promotes livestock production as an industry and as part of the farming system and raises the standard of living of small farmers and rural communities.

On 22 June 1973, the FAO Council approved the [Agreement for the Establishment of a Regional Animal Production and Health Commission for Asia and the Pacific](#) ("APHCA" or "the Agreement"). The Agreement entered into force on 29 December 1975.

### OBJECTIVES

The Commission supports Members in the Asia and Pacific Region *vis-à-vis* the coordination of their policies, plans and programmes in livestock production, and disease control and eradication, along with the exchange of information and experiences. Members agree to cooperate on regional issues concerning animal health, production, and welfare. This includes national and international research and action with respect to animal health and husbandry problems, as well as the development of regional and national livestock programmes.

### MAIN ELEMENTS

The Agreement is structured in 14 Articles. The core obligations of Members set out in Article IV, aimed at promoting the growth of national livestock industries, include (but are not limited to) the promotion of training, surveys, and research (including maintaining research institutes and laboratories where appropriate), implementation of policies on animal production and disease control, holding reserves of vaccines and genetic material, updating of relevant legislation, and provision of relevant information to the Commission.

The Commission, whose actions and priorities are determined by the Members, is mandated to:

- Plan and promote joint action for the improvement of animal production, for the survey and control of contagious and infectious diseases and recommend common standards and practices for this purpose. In this context it is also charged with establishing educational programmes to meet the needs of the animal industry and advise on standardization of education courses;
- Determine, in consultation with the Members concerned, the nature and extent of assistance needed to implement national livestock development programmes and support regional programmes;
- At the request of any Member and within budgetary limits, to assist Members with the control of zoonotic and communicable diseases whose control may be beyond the capacity of national services.

Article VII also sets out several "Special Functions of the APHC Commission", including assistance in controlling animal disease outbreaks in emergency situations and the elaboration of common regional standards and practices of animal production and health.



## POTENTIAL BENEFITS FOR PARTIES

### A. REGIONAL COLLABORATION, NETWORKING AND INFORMATION

Members gain access to a network of experts, stakeholders, and policymakers across the Asia-Pacific region, fostering collaboration on key animal health and production issues. Further, the Commission provides an opportunity for information exchange, including best practices, scientific research, and innovative technologies. They gain access to collaborative research opportunities in areas such as animal genetics, veterinary science, and disease control. The Commission also supports data-sharing platforms designed to help decision-making and align efforts for effective regional interventions in the veterinary domain. The Commission provides Members with specialized knowledge, resources, and technical support on matters related to animal health, welfare, and production systems, including access to workshops, technical missions, and capacity-building activities that enhance their technical capabilities.

### B. IMPROVED ANIMAL HEALTH AND DISEASE CONTROL

The Commission supports Members to strengthen their disease surveillance, control, and prevention programmes, improving regional biosecurity and reducing the spread of animal diseases. In doing so, the Commission helps Members to become better equipped to handle emerging diseases through regional preparedness plans and response mechanisms. Importantly, the Commission provides valuable support with the control of animal disease emergencies.

### C. INFLUENCE ON REGIONAL POLICY

Members contribute to the development of regional policies related to animal production and health, which is one of the special functions of the Commission set out in Article VII. This supports the alignment of national and regional strategies for improving animal production and ensuring food security.

### D. INCREASED VISIBILITY AND REPRESENTATION

The Agreement provides a platform for Members to showcase their work in the animal health and production sectors on an international level. Further, Members benefit from being part of a respected regional body with influence in international *fora* and organizations, even beyond FAO.

### E. SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Commission supports Members in promoting sustainable livestock production practices that enhance food security and environmental protection. In doing so, the Commission also addresses socio-economic challenges related to animal agriculture, such as poverty reduction and rural development.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** on the APHCA, model instruments for adherence to the APHCA and treaty processes in FAO, please contact: [treaties@fao.org](mailto:treaties@fao.org)